

A Study of Factors Influencing the Online Purchasing Intention toward Online Shopping in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce businesses have become popular all over the world including Thailand. Due to the convenience and time saving nature, consumers increasingly tend to buy things more from e-commerce platforms instead of from brick and mortar stores. The purpose of this study is to find how trust of customers influences the online purchasing intention toward one of the popular e-commerce platforms in Thailand. Since Thailand's e-commerce industry is becoming highly competitive, it has become more important for businesses to know the effect of customer's trust on online purchasing intention to achieve sustainable market share. Therefore, the researchers aimed to study the factors influencing online purchasing intention of customers towards a leading online shopping website in Thailand. The researchers collected 400 questionnaires from the customers who have experienced purchasing product from the e-commerce website. The researchers find the influence of perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security, consumer database safety and trust on the online purchase intention as the dependent variables. The descriptive analysis is applied for the demographic factors, where both Simple and Multi Linear Regression are used to analyze the hypothesis testing. There is positive influence on trust by guarantee return policy, perceived image of website and consumer database safety. The online purchase intention is also strongly influenced by trust.

Introduction

Today's 21st century is becoming more interconnected and is changing our shopping behavior. Ever since the last two decades, people tend to buy things more on e-commerce platforms as it is more convenient and less time consuming than traditional shopping. Sahney et al. (2013) pointed out that a change in the consumers' mindset of purchase made from a physical store to online buying, the industry has witnessed the ever-increasing volumes of online transactions. The lack of trust in online transaction has been regarded major drawback in processing transactions for the customer nowadays. Ang and Lee (2000) remarked that the websites which

does not gain the consumer's trust, cannot create the online purchasing intention. It becomes crucial to understand and manage the dynamics of consumer behavior which can be analyzed in terms of behavioral issues (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Mukherjee and Nath, 2003; Coulter and Coulter, 2002; Constantinides, 2004). According to the study of Sahney et al. (2013), online trust has the significant correlations with guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security and consumer database safety. The perceived risk for purchase online reduces the trust leading to online transaction. (D'Alessandro, Girardi and Tiangsoongnern, 2012). Hsin and Wen (2008) found out that the dependency between perceived risk and trust is reciprocal even though the two factors influence the online purchasing intention.

In this study, the researchers focus on the online purchasing intention towards Lazada.co.th Thailand, which is the largest online shopping website in Thailand. Lazada.co.th creates an easy platform for customers to shop online conveniently by providing website, mobile application, payment systems and logistics with strong secured policies. The researchers focused demographically on working people who have experienced shopping with Lazada.co.th in Thailand. The survey took place at four A-graded office building namely, AIA Sathorn tower, Sarthon Square, Bhiraj Tower and G Tower, from the central business districts of Bangkok where the highest number of working people can be found. The researchers chose Lazada's platform because they are market leader with the largest market share in Thailand. According to the record of the Top Ecommerce Sites and Apps in Thailand (2018), Lazada.co.th has 43.51 million visitors in Thailand 10/18 and regarded as the most visited B2C e-commerce platform in 2018. According Thailand Investment Review, A Haven for Savvy Investor (2015), Lazada.co.th is cited as an outstanding achievement, in particular when considering that 99% of the society in Southeast Asia favor the retail stores instead. Lazada.co.th has made purchasing easy and fun for the Thai customers with user friendly website and Mobile application. Therefore, it is important for Lazada.co.th to maintain their customer's intention to purchase online from Lazada.co.th website to uphold its current position in the market. This study is to investigate the factors affecting online buying intention in e-commerce towards Lazada.co.th. The independent variables applied in this study are perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security and consumer database safety.

Research Objective

The researchers would like to examine the important factors for their influences on online purchases intention towards Lazada.co.th. The specific objectives are

1. To study the influence of perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security and consumer database safety on trust.
2. To investigate the influence of trust on online purchase intention

Theory

Online Purchasing Intention

Mirabi et al. (2015) said that purchase intention is the impulse to buy a particular product in a particular purchasing environment. Shah et al. (2012) provided a comparable definition declaring that purchase intention is a choice-making procedure that shows the motive why customers purchases a particular product. Moreover, the researchers added that making a purchase decision is a complicated process. Ghosh (1990) stated that purchase intention is an important predictor for buying process of consumers. Online purchase intention is defined as the construct that encourages the strength of a customer's intention to purchase online (Salisbury et al., 2001). According to Close and Kukar-Kinney (2010), online purchase intention came from purchase intention. Meskaran et al. (2013) defined online purchase intention as the customers' readiness to purchase through the internet.

Trust

Online trust is a belief that the online seller can be trusted and it is a feeling of confidence and security towards the online transactions (Sahney et al., 2013). Gefen (2002) discovered that trust is the result of costumer's beliefs of benevolence and integrity towards the particular e-commerce vendor. Trust or lack off it, can create a vital physiological barrier for consumer to try or adopt new technologies and shopping behavior (Fukuyama, 1995; Egger, 2000; McCole and Palmer, 2001) And the consequence of this is the noteworthy for the importance of trust towards an e-commerce platform.

Perceived Risk

Perceived risk is a method to explain customer's behavior in the decision-making process after 1960s (Hsin and Wen, 2008). Mitchell (1999) advised that perceived risk is a powerful at explaining consumers' behavior because consumers are more often motivated to avoid mistakes than to maximize utility in purchasing. Nowadays perceived risk is defined to particular varieties of product, financial, social, physical, psychological, performance and the time when customer make transactions online that involve risk. (Boksberger et al., 2007; Chang, 2008; Corbitt et al., 2003; Lim, 2003; Mitchell, 2001; Smith and Sivakumar, 2004). According to Kim et al. (2007), perceived risk is described as a customer's perception around the prospective of uncertainty and terrible result from the electronic online transaction.

Guarantee Return Policy

Sahney et al. (2013) stated that not only the product information, money transactions and assurance of credible vendor but also the policies for returning product and warranties displayed on the webpage can stimulate the consumers to accept the reliability of e-commerce websites. Return policy of the product can be defined as leniency of returning the item after purchase within a certain period under certain circumstances by refunding cash or store credit

from the company (Wood, 2001). Wood (2001) also mentioned that guarantee product return policy is one way to reduce the possible consumer risk and dissatisfaction, but it is necessary for the retailer to avoid making overly lenient policies due to the high expectation of increased return rates and cost.

Perceived Image of Website

Perceived image of website is defined as what appears in the mind of consumer when she/he hears or see the name or logo related to the website (Barnett et al., 2006). Perceived image in e-commerce websites is also related to physical and behavioral properties of the website such as its design innovativeness, user-friendliness and how informative the website is (O'Cass and Carlson, 2012). The lack of tangibility or physical interaction of online store makes a favorable image of website which is perceived by consumers to be a critical issue in e-retailing (Pavlou et al., 2007; O'Cass and Carlson, 2012).

Transaction Security

The safety and security of transactions is the most important risk faced by any organization. The absence of physical interactivity between the consumers and the vendor in the e-retailing encourages the companies to put the priority on managing the secure online transactions (Koufaris and Hampton-Sosa, 2004). The transaction security is required to have integrity, authentication, fraud prevention and privacy of the customer (Tsiakis and Sthephanides, 2005).

Consumer Database Safety

Consumer database safety is stated as the responsibility of the related organization to store and protect the consumer privacy and information (Federal Trade Commission, 1998a). The online shopper becomes concerns about database safety when shopping from e-commerce platform since the personal data can be easily accessed and misused by the one who controlling the website (Chen and Barnes, 2007). Consumer database safety is the key element of security and privacy which make the website more secure and trustworthy (Hoffman et al., 1999). The websites can improve the credibility of the database safety by expressing third-party certifications (Palmer et al., 2000).

Related review literature

The Relationship of Trust and Online Purchasing Intention

Many researches showed that trust of the consumers positively influence the intention of buying product from online shops (Eastlick et al., 2006; Gefen, 2000). The online store can gain the consumers' trust by making promise and assurance about the product or service quality (Cowcher, 2001), and online trust is the important factor in online trading (Eastlick et al., 2006). Yoon (2002) mentioned that the shoppers who have trust upon the website are more confident to make transaction and buy from that website.

The Relationship of perceived risk and trust

Perceived risk has a negative relationship with trust (Eastlick et al., 2006). Jarvenpaa et al. (1999) explained that if the consumers trust the buyer, the perceived risk decreases and the consumers become more willing to buy from the store. Moreover, Van der Heijden et al. (2003) reported that reduced perceived risk does increase trust and attitude towards online purchasing, which in turn increases a buyer's willingness (intention) to purchase online.

The Relationship of guarantee return policy and trust

Sahney, Ghosh and Shrivastava (2013) mentioned that the expectations of the customers who would like to book for the service or buy product online, depend on guarantee return policies, which develop trust for transaction online. The return policy makes the consumers feel more trustworthy to the website and promote more buying which leads to increase in sales and return rates (Wood, 2001). Exhibiting the policies of the company regarding product returning, guarantees, and warranties, assurance of reliable vendors on the e-commerce platform can build up the consumers trust (Sahney, Ghosh and Shrivastava, 2013).

The Relationship of perceived image of website and trust

The perceptions of shoppers on the design, usefulness and resourcefulness of e-commerce platform significantly influence the trust in online shopping and make the consumers more comfortable to make transactions (Sahney et al., 2013). Sahney et al. (2013) also mentioned that reliability is one of the evaluation factors for the perceived image of an online shop and is measured by credibility and consistency of websites services that relates to online trust. The website quality, which creates the image of the website, influence the trust of consumers, which is important in making purchases (Chang et al., 2014).

The Relationship of transaction security and trust

Schlosser et al. (2006) suggested that the safety in transaction and product delivery has a significant influence upon trust of buyer in e-commerce. Cowcher (2001) stated that the absence of global-standard regulations securing online trading and transaction resulted in a consumer's concerns of internet fraud. The strong transaction security policy helps to gain a shopper's trust to purchase online without the worries of risks in transaction (Schlosser et al., 2006). Choosing the right secure payment system for online transaction creates more trustworthy condition for consumer (Tsiakis and Sthephanides, 2005).

The Relationship of consumer database safety and trust

Many online buyers admitted the great concern of risks to their privacy and their personal information stored in the database of the website (Teltzrow and Kobsa, 2004). Many studies found that the concern of online database safety is one of the major trust issues for the shopper to complete the online purchase (Bhatnagar et al., 2004). Various studies show evidence for the relation of a buyer's concerns about privacy of information to trust in making

the online purchase (Belanger et al., 2002). The assurance of customer database safety significantly develops trust and enable the consumers to do online transaction when purchasing from internet (Sahney et al., 2013).

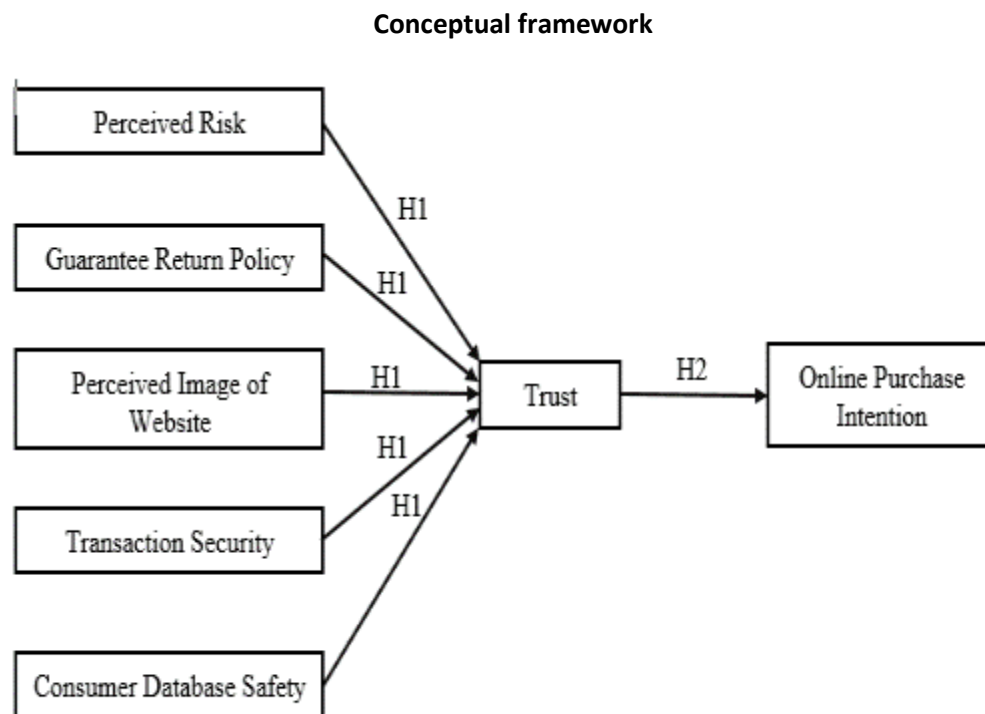


Figure 11

Hypothesis

H1_o: Trust does not have influence by perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security and consumer database safety.

H1_a: Trust is influenced by perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security and consumer database safety.

H2_o: The online purchase intention is not influenced by trust.

H2_a: The online purchase intention is influenced by trust.

Methodology

The main objective of the study is to find out the influence of perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image website, transaction security, consumer database safety, and trust towards online purchasing intention towards Lazada.co.th in Thailand. This study was conducted as the descriptive research and survey research technique is applied to provide a general overview of the data collection. The target population for this study is the working-class

male and female customers since the majority (34.3%) of Thai e-commerce users are in the age range of 25-34 years, mostly working people (ECommerce - Thailand, 2018). The number of people who have experienced with Lazada.co.th online shopping website in Thailand is unknown, thus, the researchers determined to apply the non-probabilistic sampling. The sample size of 400 was calculated by using the formula of Zikmund (2003). The researchers selected four A-graded office building namely, AIA Sathorn tower, Sarthon Square, Bhiraj Tower and G Tower, from the central business districts of Bangkok for data collection. In this study, the researchers applied the non-probability sampling method with purposive, quota and convenience sampling technique to find the sampling unit since the total population is unknown. With the reference of Curtis (2008), primary data were collected for specific problems through questionnaires and the questionnaires of this study were adopted from the previous researches. The questionnaires included nine parts; screening question, perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceive image of website, transaction security, consumer database safety, online trust, online purchase intention and demographic. The data were collected from 400 respondents who have experience in purchasing products from LAZADA website through self-administered questionnaires. The effective period of this data collection was within February 2019. The questionnaires were continually distributed to respondents until achieving designated sample size. Descriptive analysis was applied for demographic factors and Multi Linear Regression (MLR) and Simple Linear Regression (SLR) methods were used as inferential analysis for variables.

Findings

From the descriptive analysis results, the majority of the respondents are female which represents 54% of total respondents. The respondents were mostly from the age range of 16-30 years which is 62.5%. 313 respondents out of 400 (78.8%) are Thai Nationality. The majority of respondents, which is 55% of total, has Master degree. The income level between 20,001-25,000 baht is the highest percentage income level of the respondent's representation 140 respondents, (35%)

Variable	Variable Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1. Gender		
- Male	184	46
- Female	216	54
2. Age		
- 16-30	250	62.5
- 31-45	110	27.5
- 46 and Above	40	10
3. Nationality		
- Thai	313	78.3
- Non- Thai	87	21.7
4- Education		
- Bachelor Degree	140	35
- Master Degree	220	55
- Doctoral Degree	40	10
5. Income		
- Less than 10,000 THB	90	22.5
- 10,001-20,000 THB	50	12.5
- 20,001-25,000 THB	140	35
- More than 25,000 THB	120	30

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

This study included two hypotheses according to the conceptual framework. The researchers used Multiple Linear Regression analysis (MLR) for hypothesis one and Simple Linear Regression analysis (SLR) for hypothesis two.

From the analysis for hypothesis one, the researchers found that there is a positive correlation between perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security, consumer database safety and trust since the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.897. The significant level of regression model is equal to 0.000, which is less than 0.05, therefore, null hypothesis is rejected. Two out of five predictors, namely, perceived risk and transaction security, have the significant levels greater than 0.05 showing that independency on trust. The standardized coefficient (β) value of consumer database safety is 0.466 indicates that consumer database safety has the highest positive influence on trust.

The result of SLR analysis of the hypothesis two showed that trust is strongly correlated to online purchase intention ($R=0.801$) and the null hypothesis is rejected since the significant level (0.000) is less than 0.05. The standardized coefficient (β) value of trust is 0.801, Indicating that trust has strong positive influence on online purchase intention

Hypothesis	Statistical Analysis	Level of Significance	Standard Coefficient (Beta Value)	Result
H1 _o : Trust is not influenced by perceived risk, guarantee return policy, perceived image of website, transaction security and consumer database safety.	Multi Linear Regression			
Perceived Risk		0.289	0.080	Fail to reject H1 _o
Guarantee Return Policy		0.000	0.181	H1 _o is rejected
Perceived Image Of Website		0.000	0.209	H1 _o is rejected
Transaction Security		0.626	0.024	Fail to reject H1 _o
Consumer Database Safety		0.000	0.466	H1 _o is rejected
H2 _o : Online purchase intention is not influenced by trust.	Simple Linear Regression			
Trust		0.000	0.801	H2 _o is rejected

Table 28: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Recommendations

From the results of hypothesis one, the multi regression line shows customer feel significantly more trust and confidences if the e-commerce platform provides better consumer database safety, perceive image of website, guarantee return policy. Lazada.co.th needs to pay more attention to these factors, first Consumer Database Safety has the highest influence on trust and should be addressed first. It is the major psychological barrier for customers since most customers tend to be concerned about their personal data being misuse from third-party without their consent, therefore Lazada.co.th should create a standard for good data ethics based on ISO / IEC 38500(Information technology - Governance of IT for the organization) It should address the entire lifecycle of data from the collection, handling and processing, storage, reporting, distribution, presentation and deletion). The ISO/IEC-Standards have the immediate advantage of structuring common sense over the entire process. It can be a great help for Lazada's organization to streamline the process as basis for creating results. In addition, an ISO/IEC-certification can help Lazada to stamp its organization as ethically clean by a third party audit. The researchers also would like to recommend two-factor validation in website database safety to achieve effective user authentication and better protection. It will help Lazada to communicate to their customers, that strong privacy and data safety protection will lead to increase consumer confidence and trust.

Secondly, Lazada.co.th should focus their efforts on perceive image of website because it is the second highest influence on trust. The first impression of a website plays as a great attraction, when visitors enter the site.

The growing in distrust, due to more internet scam and fraud, makes consumers less interested in companies that are desperate to sell or seem unprofessional. Lazada should continue to make sure customers always get a positive, smooth and consistent experience. Consumers expect companies to be more "human" - to be able to listen and solve any problems fast, be visually appealing and easy to navigate. Having a high loading speed and performance would create a first good impression for new visitors. Lazada's market position is strong in the Thai market with 43.51 million visitors 10/18 (ecommerceiq.asia) Lazada should maintain the good quality of the effect, layout and strong brand identity which they are currently have on their website and their brand. Shopee is the only local treat with growing market share through aggressive marketing strategy. Thus, in long term, it could become multinational platform like amazon or eBay and will be easier to steal market share from Lazada. Therefore, Lazada should maintain the good quality of the effect, layout and strong brand identity as market leader, which they are currently benefit from on their website.

The third factor influencing trust is Guarantee Return Policy. Good guarantee return policy would encourage the customers to see more valuable on the product or service given by the company and create more trust. It is required to be a balancing act for the business when setting a return policy, since it could potentially increase the business expenses, however, the

business should make sure the return policy is appropriate and it is easy for the customers to return the product under the circumstances included in the policy. Lazada have 7 days easy return and 15 days if the customer changes their mind, some items with manufacturer warranty is not returnable. If Lazada wanted to increase customers trust, Lazada should increase the return days, and removed non-returnable items because of manufacturer warranty.

From the result of hypotheses two, trust has a strong positive influence upon online purchase intention. Therefore, Lazada.co.th need to build up strong trust between the customer and the company to increase the purchase intention of online shoppers.

Further study

The researchers aimed to investigate the factors influencing online purchase intention toward Lazada.co.th, e-commerce platform in Thailand. Since this study focused on specific geographic areas in Bangkok, Thailand, the researchers would like to recommends to carry out further studies to cover more areas where Lazada.co.th reaches, in order to understand deeper and wider effects for the customer purchase intention towards the company.

Different independent variables which might have influence on online purchase intention, such as brand awareness, brand association, should be investigated by the further study to get a deeper understanding of various factors for their effect for the customers purchasing intention. Different research methodology should be added in future study to obtain better understanding too. Moreover, female customers with the age range of 16-30 years group, as the majority of the demographic factors in this research, could be divided again to sub segments to really understand subculture and different lifestyle segment that trigger Lazada.co.th customer purchase intention. Perceptual mapping or market mapping analysis would also help to further understand consumers perception/mindset of Lazada compared to the competitors. This is important when Shopee, AliExpress, Amazon and eBay all provide the same business model with roughly the same product sales price, and so the choice of platform for customers usually depends on their individual sense of what is best. Finally, this research framework can be applied to other different e-commerce platforms, such as Shopee, Zalora, etc. to study the trust and purchase intention of the online shopping intention as a whole.

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